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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/617,945	07/14/2003	Brian Patrick McCarthy		4484

7590 05/25/2006
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EXAMINER

HORTON, YVONNE MICHELE

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3635

DATE MAILED: 05/25/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/617,945

Applicant(s)

MCCARTHY, BRIAN PATRICK

Examiner

Yvonne M. Horton

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 November 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

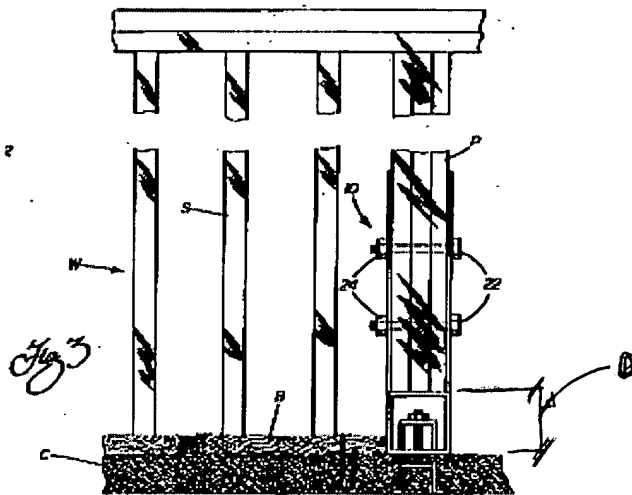
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|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

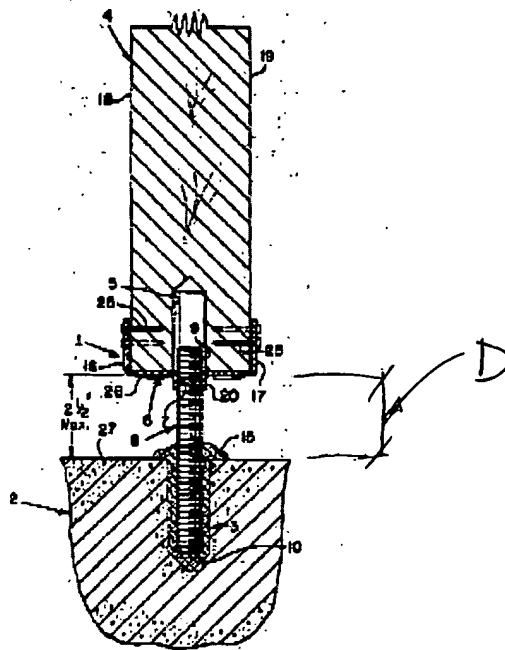
Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent #5,375,384 to WOLFSON. WOLFSON discloses a method of achieving vertical separation distance (D) between concrete (C) and a structural post (P) concealing the fasteners (32,34,42) of a bracket (12,14,16).



Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent #5,666,774 to COMMINS. COMMINS discloses a method of achieving vertical separation distance (D) between concrete (2) and a structural post (4) concealing the fasteners (8) of a bracket (1).



Applicant's arguments filed 11/10/05 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., concealment of the "nuts, bolts, and bolting strap") are not recited in the rejected claim(s). The claim merely requires concealment of the "bracket and fasteners". Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims.

Regarding the applicant's argument that device of WOLFSON "clearly protrudes beyond the bolting straps and the post itself, thereby not concealing the nuts, bolts, and the bolting strap", again, the claim only requires concealment of the "bracket and

fasteners". As such, and as noted above, the bracket (14) and fasteners (34,42) are clearly "concealed" by the tubular base (16).

In reference to the applicant's argument that the WOLFSON patent is expired due to non-payment of the maintenance fee, the fact remains that WOLFSON is made of public record and is hereby still available as prior art.

Regarding the applicant's argument that device of COMMINS "clearly protrudes beyond the bolting straps and the post itself, thereby not concealing the nuts, bolts, and the bolting strap", again, the claim only requires concealment of the "bracket and fasteners". As such, and as shown in the figure above, the fastener (8) is clearly "concealed" by the post (4) and the bracket (1). As for the bracket (1), the bracket (1) is "aesthetically" secured onto the bottom of the post (4) and "concealed" neatly between the post (4) and the structural member (2).

In response to applicant's argument that the bracket of WOLFSON is designed *for use* with a hold-down and the device of COMMINS is *intended for* applications where concealment is not considered, a recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim.

The applicant should be reminded that the term "concealed" is broad. If the applicant is seeking a more detailed definition of how the fastener and bracket are "concealed" he should amend the claims to specifically detail how the bracket and fasteners are "concealed".

An examination of this application reveals that applicant is unfamiliar with patent prosecution procedure. While an inventor may prosecute the application, lack of skill in this field usually acts as a liability in affording the maximum protection for the invention disclosed. Applicant is advised to secure the services of a registered patent attorney or agent to prosecute the application, since the value of a patent is largely dependent upon skilled preparation and prosecution. The Office cannot aid in selecting an attorney or agent.

A listing of registered patent attorneys and agents is available on the USPTO Internet web site <http://www.uspto.gov> in the Site Index under "Attorney and Agent Roster." Applicants may also obtain a list of registered patent attorneys and agents located in their area by writing to the Mail Stop OED, Director of the U. S. Patent and Trademark Office, PO Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

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the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.



Yvonne M. Horton
Art Unit 3635
05/23/06



Carl D. Friedman
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Group 3600